Release Planning

734.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This office recognizes that inmates may require information and assistance with health care follow-up upon release from custody. The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines to assist staff with providing resources for the continuity of an inmate's health care after he/she is released from custody. This is accomplished in coordination with the contract medical provider, custody staff, and the jail transition teams.

734.1.1 DEFINITION

Definitions related to this policy include:

Release planning - The process of providing sufficient resources for the continuity of health care to an inmate before his/her release to the community.

734.2 POLICY

The qualified health care professional should work with correctional staff to ensure that inmates who have been in custody for 30 or more days and have pending release dates, as well as serious health, dental or mental health needs, are provided with medication and health care resources sufficient for the inmate to seek health care services once released.

The Chief Deputy of Corrections or the authorized designee shall be responsible for ensuring that release preparation curriculum and materials are developed and maintained for this purpose, and that community resource information is kept current. Release planning should include:

(a) Resources for community-based organizations that provide health care services, housing, funding streams, employment and vocational rehabilitation.

(b) Lists of community health professionals.

(c) Discussions with the inmate that emphasize the importance of appropriate follow-up care.

(d) Specific appointments and medications that are arranged for the inmate at the time of release.

734.3 PREPARATION FOR RELEASE

Upon notification of the imminent release of an inmate who has been identified as having serious medical or mental health needs, release planning shall include the following:

(a) A medical screening shall be conducted to assess the inmate's immediate medical needs, and arrangements should be made for community follow-up where needed, including sufficient medication.

(b) With the inmate's written consent, the qualified health care professional should:

1. Share necessary information with health care services.

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2. Arrange for follow-up appointments.

3. Arrange for the transfer of health summaries and relevant parts of the health record to community health care services or others who are assisting in planning for or providing services upon the inmate’s release.

(c) Contact with community providers shall be documented via an administrative note in the inmate’s health record.

(d) Inmates with serious mental health issues, including those receiving psychotropic medication, shall be informed about community options for continuing treatment and provided with follow-up appointments, when reasonably possible.

(e) Medication will be provided as appropriate.

734.4 RELEASE PLANNING RECORDS

All records of community referrals, transfer forms, logs, documentation of release planning, lists of medication provided, records release authorization forms and any other relevant documents shall be maintained in the inmate’s health file and retained in accordance with established records retention schedules.

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